

Front Page    Edit Page    Other Page    **6**

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.  
TRIBUNE

M. 215,803  
S. 651,844

FEB 21 1966.

## Bryan Yarn Too Good for His 'Hero'

P. S. WILKINSON, by  
C. D. B. Bryan (Harper,  
441 pages, \$5.95).

Reviewed by  
DAVID SHERIDAN

During the late 1950s before the Kennedy administration, the Peace Corps and widespread civil rights demonstrations, a college generation came of age that was considered apathetic and uncommitted to any cause outside their own personal lives.

Essays and editorials were written about them. Professors scolded them. But nothing seemed to move them, to stir their emotions.

THE TITLE character of this novel appears to be a card-carrying member of this peer group.

In postwar Korea as a lieutenant in Army intelligence, disillusioned and self-pitying, P.S. Wilkinson and his commanding officer tangle over an order that all prostitutes caught visiting soldiers in the American compound will have their heads shaven.

Wilkinson returns home to find he is even more disenchanted and bewildered, not having the faintest idea what he is going to do with his life.

In a hilarious scene, Wilkinson is turned down by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) when a lie detector operator becomes convinced he is a homosexual.

DRIFTING aimlessly along, Wilkinson meets a former sweetheart who is now married and tries unsuccessfully to seduce her. Later she is unsuccessful at seducing our hero.

Eventually, of course, they get together, but the Berlin crises intervene, and Wilkinson, a reservist, finds himself at Ft. Lewis, Washington, where he shoots off his mouth to the press about the utter stupidity of the call-up and gets himself in hot water with the brass.

A poignant flashback of Wilkinson being caught cheating in a Latin exam and thrown out of prep school provides an appropriate climax to the novel.

Author C. D. B. Bryan, John O'Hara's stepson, received the 1965 Harper Prize Novel award for this, his first novel.

A PROMISING short story writer whose work appears frequently in the New Yorker, Bryan handles Wilkinson and all his difficulties in a very orthodox but craftsmanlike fashion.

Unfortunately, the title character emerges as a rather ordinary, melancholic sort, hardly worth writing about at all since he is neither significant nor particularly colorful.

DAVID SHERIDAN is a staff writer for the Minneapolis Tribune.